

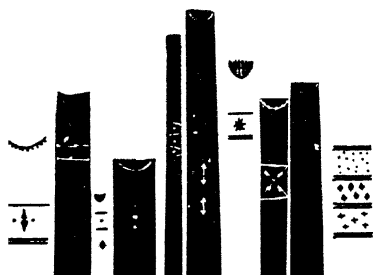
92 C468e

68-07138

~~reference.
collection
book~~



kansas city
public library
kansas city,
missouri



KANSAS CITY, MO. PUBLIC LIBRARY

0 0001 0312288 3

DATE DUE

MAY SEP 28 1989

MAY NOV 28 1989

MAY FEB 21 1990

SEP 21 1992

92 C468e

Einhard, 770(ca.)-840.

The life of Charlemagne.

[1960]

THE LIFE OF CHARLEMAGNE

THE LIFE OF CHARLEMAGNE

by
EINHARD

With a Foreword by Sidney Painter

ANN ARBOR PAPERBACKS
The University of Michigan Press

First edition as an Ann Arbor Paperback 1960

Sixth printing 1966

All rights reserved

Foreword copyright © by The University of Michigan 1960

Published in the United States of America by

The University of Michigan Press and simultaneously
in Rexdale, Canada, by Ambassador Books Limited

Translated from the *Monumenta Germaniae*, with Notes
and a Map, by Samuel Epes Turner

Manufactured in the United States of America

FOREWORD

by SIDNEY PAINTER

CHARLEMAGNE or Charles the Great who is counted as Charles I in the conventional lists of kings of France was one of the truly imposing figures of history. At the height of his power he ruled all the Christian lands of Western Europe except the British Isles and southern Italy and Sicily under the titles of king of the Franks and the Lombards and Roman emperor. He held this vast realm in a grip of iron and cowed its foes on every frontier. He also initiated and encouraged a revival of learning which is sometimes called the Carolingian Renaissance. While this was a brief flash of light in a dark age, it left sparks which made the succeeding period less gloomy and supplied the beginnings of a permanent revival in the twelfth century.

In order to understand the magnitude of Charlemagne's achievement it is necessary to know something of the world into which he

KANSAS CITY (MO.) PUBLIC LIBRARY

Ref.

4.40

6807138

was born. In the fifth and sixth centuries after Christ, Germanic invaders overran the western provinces of the Roman Empire. In the year 700 most of England was ruled by a number of Anglo-Saxon kings, Spain by Visigothic monarchs, and northern and central Italy by the kings of the Lombards. The lands covered today by France and Belgium and the part of Germany known in the Middle Ages as Franconia formed the Frankish state ruled by the kings of the Merovingian line. In 711 Moslems from North Africa overwhelmed the Visigothic kingdom and occupied Spain. Along the eastern frontier of the Frankish state were such Germanic peoples as the Saxons and Bavarians. The plains of the Danube Valley were occupied by a Turkish people called Avars. Southern Italy, Sicily, and a few isolated districts such as Rome and Ravenna recognized the sovereignty of the Byzantine emperor in Constantinople, the successor to the Roman emperors.

Roman civilization had gradually disappeared under the rule of the Germanic kings. Except for Ireland where a few monks still cherished the ancient learning and Northumbria where both Irish and Roman missionaries had fostered a brief revival, Western Europe knew little of bare literacy and practically

nothing of real learning. In the Frankish state even the bishops were barely literate.

The economic system of the Roman Empire had also decayed. The Germanic kings had no interest in keeping up roads and bridges and less in policing the trade routes. Overland trade had largely disappeared. The Mediterranean which had formed the heart of the Roman system of communications was harassed by Moslem fleets. As trade declined, the circulation of money grew less and less. By 700 Western Europe was essentially a region of localized agricultural economy. The farmer raised his own raw material and made the crude goods his family needed. The nobles lived on the rents collected from men who farmed their land.

In 700 the Merovingian state was weak and disorganized. The kings were mere figure-heads, and the land was ruled by cliques of nobles who fought each other fiercely for power. Its armies were half-armed mobs of little effectiveness in war. While the realm was officially Christian and kings and nobles made generous gifts to churches and monasteries, the clergy were hard to distinguish in life and thought from the secular lords. Christian ethics had as yet had little effect on the ways of the Germans.

Charlemagne's grandfather, Charles Martel, was the head of a victorious noble group. As mayor of the palace, or as he usually called himself *dux* or leader of the Franks, he organized an effective military force by seizing church lands and using them to support soldiers who would serve him as heavily armed cavalry. He repulsed a Moslem invasion and conquered part of Saxony. His successor, Pepin, reorganized the Frankish church with the aid of the great Anglo-Saxon missionary, St. Boniface of Crediton. Pepin removed the last Merovingian king and was himself crowned king, first by St. Boniface and later by Pope Stephen. He drove the Lombards from the vicinity of Rome and gave the government of that region to the pope. This was the origin of the later states of the Church.

Einhard's biography will tell you what Charlemagne accomplished, but it is important to remember the difficulties he faced which Einhard does not mention because he took them for granted. Charlemagne had no revenue in money. He and his court lived on the produce of the royal estates. He supported his officials and his cavalry by giving them land and the labor to farm it. The rest of his army was a general levy of infantry from his subjects. How he succeeded in mustering large

armies at distant frontiers and supplying them during long and strenuous campaigns is almost incomprehensible. Just as difficult to understand is how he procured the obedience of his officials scattered over his vast realm. The only possible answer seems to be that he was a man of amazing ability and force of character. We do not need Einhard to show us that Charlemagne was a great man—the chronicles of his reign and the official documents which are still preserved show that. But Einhard gives us a picture of the man and his way of life.

Einhard was born in the ancient Frankish homeland in the valley of the River Main about 775. He was brought up in the monastery of Fulda, which was the chief center of learning in the Frankish lands. In 791 or 792 his abbot persuaded Charlemagne to take him into his court. Early in his reign Charlemagne had gathered men of learning about him and established a palace school headed by a Northumbrian scholar named Alcuin. Soon after Einhard's arrival Alcuin retired to a monastery near Tours. When in 799 Charlemagne asked Alcuin a question about the classics, he told him to consult Einhard. Although Einhard clearly was on intimate terms with Charlemagne and carried out a number of errands

for him on affairs of state, he never achieved high office during his reign. But after Charlemagne's death in 814 his son and successor Louis the Pious made Einhard his private secretary and loaded him with honors and benefices. He retired from court in 828, when the quarrels between Louis and his sons grew acute, and lived in a quiet retreat until 840.

Einhard wrote a number of works, but his *Vita Caroli Magni* or *Life of Charlemagne* is by far the most interesting. It was written between 817 and 836, probably between 817 and 830. Einhard made extensive use of the chronicles known as the *annales royales*, which furnished his basic material on Charlemagne's campaigns and political activities. He also consulted works by some of his colleagues in the palace school and documents in the royal archives to which he had access as secretary of Louis the Pious. While he made a number of mistakes in interpreting this material, on the whole his work appears accurate when compared with other sources. Finally, he drew on his own memory of Charlemagne, his character, and his way of life. To the historian this is his great contribution.

When Einhard undertook the task of writing a biography of his patron, he was faced

with a serious problem. How did one write a biography? The only models being produced by his contemporaries were lives of saints, and they would hardly serve his purpose. Hence he turned to one of the few classical works available, *De Vita Caesarum*, the *Lives of the Caesars* by the Roman historian Suetonius. He used particularly the biography of Augustus. From this work he took the general form and organization of his work. He also borrowed many descriptive phrases. Some scholars have charged that he used expressions of Suetonius even when they did not really apply to Charlemagne and so distorted his result. The best recent opinion, however, holds that he used Suetonius wisely as a guide and copied only phrases that were appropriate.

Einhard was obviously writing to honor Charlemagne. He clearly passes over delicately various details he considered embarrassing, such as the morals of the king's daughters. Nevertheless, his account has the ring of truth. The Charlemagne he describes could have done what we know he actually did. The biography was immensely popular. Some eighty manuscripts still survive and a number of these were produced in the ninth and tenth centuries. This fame was well deserved. Ein-

hard wrote the first medieval biography of a lay figure, and his subject was the greatest man of the age whose memory was revered in both history and legend throughout the Middle Ages.

CONTENTS

Einhard's Preface	15
The Life of the Emperor Charles	23
i. The Merovingians	23
ii. Charlemagne's Ancestors	24
iii. Charlemagne's Accession	26
iv. Plan of This Work	27
v. Aquitanian War	27
vi. Lombard War	28
vii. Saxon War	30
viii. Saxon War (continued)	32
ix. Spanish Expedition	33
x. Submission of the Bretons and Beneventans	34
xi. Tassilo and the Bavarian Campaign	35
xii. Slavic War	37
xiii. War with the Huns	37
xiv. Danish War	39
xv. Extent of Charlemagne's Conquests	40
xvi. Foreign Relations	41
xvii. Public Works	43
xviii. Private Life	45
xix. Private Life (continued)	46

xx. Conspiracies Against Charlemagne	48
xxi. Charlemagne's Treatment of Foreigners	49
xxii. Personal Appearance	50
xxiii. Dress	51
xxiv. Habits	52
xxv. Studies	53
xxvi. Piety	54
xxvii. Generosity	55
xxviii. Charlemagne Crowned Emperor	56
xxix. Reforms	57
xxx. Coronation of Louis—Charlemagne's Death	58
xxxi. Burial	60
xxxii. Omens of Death	60
xxxiii. Will	62
Notes	69
Genealogical Table	75
Map	20-21

EINHARD'S PREFACE

SINCE I have taken upon myself to narrate the public and private life, and no small part of the deeds, of my lord and foster-father, the most excellent and most justly renowned King Charles, I have condensed the matter into as brief a form as possible. I have been careful not to omit any facts that could come to my knowledge, but at the same time not to offend by a prolix style those minds that despise everything modern, if one can possibly avoid offending by a new work men who seem to despise also the masterpieces of antiquity, the works of most learned and luminous writers. Very many of them, I have no doubt, are men devoted to a life of literary leisure, who feel that the affairs of the present generation ought not to be passed by, and who do not consider everything done today as unworthy of mention and deserving to be given over to

silence and oblivion, but are nevertheless seduced by lust of immortality to celebrate the glorious deeds of other times by some sort of composition rather than to deprive posterity of the mention of their own names by not writing at all.

Be this as it may, I see no reason why I should refrain from entering upon a task of this kind, since no man can write with more accuracy than I of events that took place about me, and of facts concerning which I had personal knowledge, ocular demonstration, as the saying goes, and I have no means of ascertaining whether or not any one else has the subject in hand.

In any event, I would rather commit my story to writing, and hand it down to posterity in partnership with others, so to speak, than to suffer the most glorious life of this most excellent king, the greatest of all the princes of his day, and his illustrious deeds, hard for men of later times to imitate, to be wrapped in the darkness of oblivion.

But there are still other reasons, neither unwarrantable nor insufficient, in my opinion, that urge me to write on this subject, namely, the care that King Charles bestowed upon me in my childhood, and my constant friendship with himself and his children after I took up

my abode at court. In this way he strongly endeared me to himself, and made me greatly his debtor as well in death as in life, so that were I, unmindful of the benefits conferred upon me, to keep silence concerning the most glorious and illustrious deeds of a man who claims so much at my hands, and suffer his life to lack due eulogy and written memorial, as if he had never lived, I should deservedly appear ungrateful, and be so considered, albeit my powers are feeble, scanty, next to nothing indeed, and not at all adapted to write and set forth a life that would tax the eloquence of a Tully.

I submit the book. It contains the history of a very great and distinguished man; but there is nothing in it to wonder at besides his deeds, except the fact that I, who am a barbarian, and very little versed in the Roman language, seem to suppose myself capable of writing gracefully and respectably in Latin, and to carry my presumption so far as to disdain the sentiment that Cicero is said in the first book of the "Tusculan Disputations" to have expressed when speaking of the Latin authors. His words are: "It is an outrageous abuse both of time and literature for a man to commit his thoughts to writing without having the ability either to arrange them or elucidate

them, or attract readers by some charm of style." This dictum of the famous orator might have deterred me from writing if I had not made up my mind that it was better to risk the opinions of the world, and put my little talents for composition to the test, than to slight the memory of so great a man for the sake of sparing myself.

THE LIFE OF THE EMPEROR CHARLES

1. The Merovingian family, from which the Franks used to choose their kings, is commonly said to have lasted until the time of Childeric,¹ who was deposed, shaved, and thrust into the cloister by command of the Roman Pontiff Stephen.² But although, to all outward appearance, it ended with him, it had long since been devoid of vital strength, and conspicuous only from bearing the empty epithet Royal; the real power and authority in the kingdom lay in the hands of the chief officer of the court, the so-called Mayor of the Palace, and he was at the head of affairs. There was nothing left the King to do but to be content with his name of King, his flowing hair, and long beard,³ to sit on his throne and play the ruler, to give ear to the ambassadors that came from all quarters, and to dismiss them, as if on his own responsibility, in words that were, in fact, sug-

751-52

gested to him, or even imposed upon him. He had nothing that he could call his own beyond this vain title of King and the precarious support allowed by the Mayor of the Palace in his discretion, except a single country seat, that brought him but a very small income. There was a dwelling house upon this, and a small number of servants attached to it, sufficient to perform the necessary offices. When he had to go abroad, he used to ride in a cart, drawn by a yoke of oxen,⁴ driven, peasant-fashion, by a ploughman; he rode in this way to the palace and to the general assembly of the people, that met once a year for the welfare of the kingdom, and he returned him in like manner. The Mayor of the Palace took charge of the government and of everything that had to be planned or executed at home or abroad.

715-41 II. At the time of Childeric's deposition, Pepin, the father of King Charles, held this office of Mayor of the Palace, one might almost say, by hereditary right; for Pepin's father, Charles, had received it at the hands of his father, Pepin, and filled it with distinction. It was this Charles that crushed the tyrants who claimed to rule the whole Frank land as their own, and that utterly routed the Saracens, when they attempted the conquest of Gaul, in two great battles—one in Aquitania, near the

town of Poitiers, and the other on the River Berre,⁵ near Narbonne—and compelled them to return to Spain. This honor was usually conferred by the people only upon men eminent from their illustrious birth and ample wealth. For some years, ostensibly under King Childeric, Pepin, the father of King Charles, shared the duties inherited from his father and grandfather most amicably with his brother, Carloman. The latter, then, for reasons unknown, renounced the heavy cares of an earthly crown and retired to Rome. Here he exchanged his worldly garb for a cowl, and built a monastery on Mt. Oreste, near the Church of St. Sylvester, where he enjoyed for several years the seclusion that he desired, in company with certain others who had the same object in view. But so many distinguished Franks made the pilgrimage to Rome to fulfill their vows, and insisted upon paying their respects to him, as their former lord, on the way, that the repose which he so much loved was broken by these frequent visits, and he was driven to change his abode. Accordingly, when he found that his plans were frustrated by his many visitors, he abandoned the mountain, and withdrew to the Monastery of St. Benedict, on Monte Cassino, in the province of Samnium, and passed the rest

747

754

of his days there in the exercises of religion.

752-68 iii. Pepin, however, was raised, by decree of
the Roman Pontiff, from the rank of Mayor of
the Palace to that of King, and ruled alone
over the Franks for fifteen years or more.⁶ He
Sept. 24, died of dropsy, in Paris, at the close of the
768 Aquitanian war,⁷ which he had waged with
760-68 William, Duke of Aquitania, for nine succes-
sive years, and left two sons, Charles and
Carloman, upon whom, by the grace of God,
the succession devolved.

Oct. 9, The Franks, in a general assembly of the
768 people, made them both kings, on condition
that they should divide the whole kingdom
equally between them, Charles to take and
rule the part that had belonged to their father,
Pepin, and Carloman the part which their
uncle, Carloman, had governed.⁸ The condi-
tions were accepted, and each entered into pos-
session of the share of the kingdom that fell
to him by this arrangement; but peace was
only maintained between them with the great-
est difficulty, because many of Carloman's
party kept trying to disturb their good under-
standing, and there were some even who plot-
ted to involve them in a war with each other.
The event, however, showed the danger to
have been rather imaginary than real, for at
Carloman's death his widow⁹ fled to Italy with

her sons¹⁰ and her principal adherents, and without reason, despite her husband's brother, put herself and her children under the protection of Desiderius, King of the Lombards. Carloman had succumbed to disease after ruling two years¹¹ in common with his brother, and at his death Charles was unanimously elected King of the Franks.

Dec. 4,
771

iv. It would be folly, I think, to write a word concerning Charles' birth¹² and infancy, or even his boyhood, for nothing has ever been written on the subject, and there is no one alive now who can give information of it. Accordingly, I have determined to pass that by as unknown, and to proceed at once to treat of his character, his deeds, and such other facts of his life as are worth telling and setting forth, and shall first give an account of his deeds at home and abroad, then of his character and pursuits, and lastly of his administration and death, omitting nothing worth knowing or necessary to know.

v. His first undertaking in a military way was the Aquitanian war,¹³ begun by his father, but not brought to a close; and because he thought that it could be readily carried through, he took it up while his brother was yet alive, calling upon him to render aid. The campaign once opened, he conducted it with

769

the greatest vigor, notwithstanding his brother withheld the assistance that he had promised, and did not desist or shrink from his self-imposed task until, by his patience and firmness, he had completely gained his ends. He compelled Hunold, who had attempted to seize Aquitania after Waifar's death, and renew the war then almost concluded, to abandon Aquitania and flee to Gascony. Even here he gave him no rest, but crossed the River Garonne, built the castle of Fronsac, and sent ambassadors to Lupus, Duke of Gascony, to demand the surrender of the fugitive, threatening to take him by force unless he were promptly given up to him. Thereupon Lupus chose the wiser course, and not only gave Hunold up, but submitted himself, with the province which he ruled, to the King.

773 VI. After bringing this war to an end and settling matters in Aquitania (his associate in authority had meantime departed this life), he was induced, by the prayers and entreaties of Hadrian,¹⁴ Bishop of the city of Rome, to wage war on the Lombards. His father before him had undertaken this task at the request of Pope Stephen,¹⁵ but under great difficulties, for certain leading Franks, of whom he usually took counsel, had so vehemently opposed his design as to declare openly that they would

leave the King and go home. Nevertheless, the war against the Lombard King Astolf had been taken up and very quickly concluded. Now, although Charles seems to have had similar, or rather just the same grounds for declaring war that his father had, the war itself differed from the preceding one alike in its difficulties and its issue. Pepin, to be sure, after besieging King Astolf a few days in Pavia, had compelled him to give hostages, to restore to the Romans the cities and castles that he had taken, and to make oath that he would not attempt to seize them again: but Charles did not cease, after declaring war, until he had exhausted King Desiderius by a long siege, and forced him to surrender at discretion; driven his son Adalgis, the last hope of the Lombards, not only from his kingdom, but from all Italy; restored to the Romans all that they had lost; subdued Hruodgaus, Duke of Friuli, who was plotting revolution; reduced all Italy to his power, and set his son Pepin as king over it.

At this point I should describe Charles' difficult passage over the Alps into Italy, and the hardships that the Franks endured in climbing the trackless mountain ridges, the heaven-aspiring cliffs and ragged peaks, if it were not my purpose in this work to record the manner of

his life rather than the incidents of the wars that he waged. Suffice it to say that this war ended with the subjection of Italy, the banishment of King Desiderius for life, the expulsion of his son Adalgis from Italy, and the restoration of the conquests of the Lombard kings to Hadrian, the head of the Roman Church.

VII. At the conclusion of this struggle, the Saxon war, that seems to have been only laid aside for the time, was taken up again. No war ever undertaken by the Frank nation was carried on with such persistence and bitterness, or cost so much labor, because the Saxons, like almost all the tribes of Germany, were a fierce people, given to the worship of devils, and hostile to our religion, and did not consider it dishonorable to transgress and violate all law, human and divine. Then there were peculiar circumstances that tended to cause a breach of peace every day. Except in a few places, where large forests or mountain ridges intervened and made the bounds certain, the line between ourselves and the Saxons passed almost in its whole extent through an open country, so that there was no end to the murders, thefts, and arsons on both sides. In this way the Franks
772 became so embittered that they at last resolved to make reprisals no longer, but to come to open war with the Saxons. Accordingly war

was begun against them, and was waged for thirty-three successive years with great fury; more, however, to the disadvantage of the Saxons than of the Franks. It could doubtless have been brought to an end sooner, had it not been for the faithlessness of the Saxons. It is hard to say how often they were conquered, and, humbly submitting to the King, promised to do what was enjoined upon them, gave without hesitation the required hostages, and received the officers sent them from the King. They were sometimes so much weakened and reduced that they promised to renounce the worship of devils, and to adopt Christianity, but they were no less ready to violate these terms than prompt to accept them, so that it is impossible to tell which came easier to them to do; scarcely a year passed from the beginning of the war without such changes on their part. But the King did not suffer his high purpose and steadfastness—firm alike in good and evil fortune—to be wearied by any fickleness on their part, or to be turned from the task that he had undertaken; on the contrary, he never allowed their faithless behavior to go unpunished, but either took the field against them in person, or sent his counts with an army to wreak vengeance¹⁶ and exact righteous satisfaction. At last, after

772-804

conquering and subduing all who had offered resistance, he took ten thousand of those that
804 lived on the banks of the Elbe, and settled them, with their wives and children, in many different bodies here and there in Gaul and Germany. The war that had lasted so many years was at length ended by their acceding to the terms offered by the King; which were renunciation of their national religious customs and the worship of devils, acceptance of the sacraments of the Christian faith and religion, and union with the Franks to form one people.

VIII. Charles himself fought but two pitched battles in this war, although it was long protracted—one on Mount Osning,¹⁷ at the place
783 called Detmold, and again on the bank of the river Hase,¹⁸ both in the space of little more than a month. The enemy were so routed and overthrown in these two battles that they never afterwards ventured to take the offensive or to resist the attacks of the King, unless they were protected by a strong position. A great many of the Frank as well as of the Saxon nobility, men occupying the highest posts of honor, perished in this war, which only
804 came to an end after the lapse of thirty-two years. So many and grievous were the wars that were declared against the Franks in the

meantime, and skillfully conducted by the King, that one may reasonably question whether his fortitude or his good fortune is to be more admired. The Saxon war began two years before the Italian war;¹⁹ but although it went on without interruption, business elsewhere was not neglected, nor was there any shrinking from other equally arduous contests. The King, who excelled all the princes of his time in wisdom and greatness of soul, did not suffer difficulty to deter him or danger to daunt him from anything that had to be taken up or carried through, for he had trained himself to bear and endure whatever came, without yielding in adversity, or trusting to the deceitful favors of fortune in prosperity.

ix. In the midst of this vigorous and almost uninterrupted struggle with the Saxons, he covered the frontier by garrisons at the proper points, and marched over the Pyrenees into Spain at the head of all the forces that he could muster. All the towns and castles that he attacked surrendered, and up to the time of his homeward march he sustained no loss whatever; but on his return through the Pyrenees he had cause to rue the treachery of the Gascons. That region is well adapted for ambuscades by reason of the thick forests that cover it; and as the army was advancing in the long

778 line of march necessitated by the narrowness of the road, the Gascons, who lay in ambush on the top of a very high mountain, attacked the rear of the baggage train and the rear guard in charge of it, and hurled them down to the very bottom of the valley.²⁰ In the struggle that ensued, they cut them off to a man; they then plundered the baggage, and dispersed with all speed in every direction under cover of approaching night. The lightness of their armor and the nature of the battle ground stood the Gascons in good stead on this occasion, whereas the Franks fought at a disadvantage in every respect, because of the weight of their armor and the unevenness of the ground. Eggihard, the King's steward; Anselm, Count Palatine; and Roland,²¹ Governor of the March of Brittany, with very many others, fell in this engagement. This ill turn could not be avenged for the nonce, because the enemy scattered so widely after carrying out their plan that not the least clue could be had to their whereabouts.

786 x. Charles also subdued the Bretons, who live on the sea coast, in the extreme western part of Gaul. When they refused to obey him, he sent an army against them, and compelled them to give hostages, and to promise to do his bidding. He afterwards entered Italy in person

with his army, and passed through Rome to Capua, a city in Campania, where he pitched his camp and threatened the Beneventans with hostilities unless they should submit themselves to him. Their duke, Aragis, escaped the danger by sending his two sons, Rumold and Grimold, with a great sum of money to meet the King, begging him to accept them as hostages, and promising for himself and his people compliance with all the King's commands, on the single condition that his personal attendance should not be required. The King took the welfare of the people into account rather than the stubborn disposition of the Duke, accepted the proffered hostages, and released him from the obligation to appear before him in consideration of his handsome gift. He retained the younger son only as hostage, and sent the elder back to his father, and returned to Rome, leaving commissioners with Aragis to exact the oath of allegiance, and administer it to the Beneventans. He stayed in Rome several days in order to pay his devotions at the holy places, and then came back to Gaul. 787

XI. At this time, on a sudden, the Bavarian war broke out, but came to a speedy end. It was due to the arrogance and folly of Duke Tassilo. His wife,²² a daughter of King Desiderius, was desirous of avenging her father's

banishment through the agency of her husband, and accordingly induced him to make a treaty with the Huns, the neighbors of the Bavarians on the east, and not only to leave the King's commands unfulfilled, but to challenge him to war. Charles' high spirit could not brook Tassilo's insubordination, for it seemed to him to pass all bounds; accordingly he straightway summoned his troops from all sides for a campaign against Bavaria, and appeared in person with a great army on the river Lech, which forms the boundary between the Bavarians and the Alemanni. After pitching his camp upon its banks, he determined to put the Duke's disposition to the test by an embassy before entering the province. Tassilo did not think that it was for his own or his people's good to persist, so he surrendered himself to the King, gave the hostages demanded, among them his own son Theodo, and promised by oath not to give ear to any one who should attempt to turn him from his allegiance; so this war, which bade fair to be very grievous, came very quickly to an end. Tassilo, however, was afterward summoned to the King's presence, and not suffered to depart, and the government of the province that he had had in charge was no longer intrusted to a duke, but to counts.

xii. After these uprisings had been thus
quelled, war was declared against the Slavs 789
who are commonly known among us as Wilzi,
but properly, that is to say in their own
tongue, are called Welatabians. The Saxons
served in this campaign as auxiliaries among
the tribes that followed the King's standard
at his summons, but their obedience lacked
sincerity and devotion. War was declared be-
cause the Slavs kept harassing the Abodriti,
old allies of the Franks, by continual raids, in
spite of all commands to the contrary. A gulf²³
of unknown length, but nowhere more than a
hundred miles wide, and in many parts nar-
rower, stretches off towards the east from the
Western Ocean. Many tribes have settlements
on its shores; the Danes and Swedes, whom
we call Northmen, on the northern shore and
all the adjacent islands; but the southern
shore is inhabited by the Slavs and Aïsti,²⁴ and
various other tribes. The Welatabians, against
whom the King now made war, were the chief
of these; but in a single campaign, which he
conducted in person, he so crushed and sub- 789
dued them that they did not think it advisable
thereafter to refuse obedience to his com-
mands.

xiii. The war against the Avars, or Huns,²⁵
followed, and, except the Saxon war, was the 791

791 greatest that he waged; he took it up with more spirit than any of his other wars, and made far greater preparations for it. He conducted one campaign in person in Pannonia, of which the Huns then had possession. He intrusted all subsequent operations to his son, Pepin, and the governors of the provinces, to counts even, and lieutenants. Although they most vigorously prosecuted the war, it only came to a conclusion after a seven years' struggle. The utter depopulation of Pannonia, and the site of the Khan's palace, now a desert, where not a trace of human habitation is visible, bear witness how many battles were fought in those years, and how much blood was shed. The entire body of the Hun nobility perished in this contest, and all its glory with it. All the money and treasure that had been years amassing was seized, and no war in which the Franks have ever engaged within the memory of man brought them such riches and such booty. Up to that time the Huns had passed²⁶ for a poor people, but so much gold and silver was found in the Khan's palace, and so much valuable spoil taken in battle, that one may well think that the Franks took justly from the Huns what the Huns had formerly taken unjustly from other nations. Only two of the chief men of the Franks fell in this war

—Eric, Duke of Friuli, who was killed in Tarsatch,²⁷ a town on the coast of Liburnia, by the treachery of the inhabitants; and Gerold,²⁸ Governor of Bavaria, who met his death in Pannonia, slain, with two men that were accompanying him, by an unknown hand while he was marshaling his forces for battle against the Huns, and riding up and down the line encouraging his men. This war was otherwise almost a bloodless one so far as the Franks were concerned, and ended most satisfactorily, although by reason of its magnitude it was long protracted.

xiv. The Saxon war next came to an end as successful as the struggle had been long. The Bohemian and Linonian wars²⁹ that next broke out could not last long; both were quickly carried through under the leadership of the younger Charles. The last of these wars was the one declared against the Northmen called Danes. They began their career as pirates, but afterward took to laying waste the coasts of Gaul and Germany with their large fleet. Their King Godfred was so puffed with vain aspirations that he counted on gaining empire over all Germany, and looked upon Saxony and Frisia as his provinces. He had already subdued his neighbors the Abodriti, and made them tributary, and boasted that he would

shortly appear with a great army before Aix-la-Chapelle, where the King held his court. Some faith was put in his words, empty as they sound, and it is supposed that he would have attempted something of the sort if he had not been prevented by a premature death. He was
810 murdered by one of his own bodyguard, and so ended at once his life and the war that he had begun.

xv. Such are the wars, most skilfully planned and successfully fought, which this most powerful king waged during the forty-seven years of his reign.³⁰ He so largely increased the Frank kingdom, which was already great and strong when he received it at his father's hands, that more than double its former territory was added to it. The authority of the Franks was formerly confined to that part of Gaul included between the Rhine and the Loire, the Ocean and the Balearic Sea; to that part of Germany which is inhabited by the so-called Eastern Franks, and is bounded by Saxony and the Danube, the Rhine and the Saale—this stream separates the Thuringians from the Sorabians; and to the country of the Alemanni and Bavarians. By the wars above mentioned he first made tributary Aquitania, Gascony, and the whole of the region of the Pyrenees as far as the River Ebro, which rises

in the land of the Navarrese, flows through the most fertile districts of Spain, and empties into the Balearic Sea, beneath the walls of the city of Tortosa. He next reduced and made tributary all Italy from Aosta to Lower Calabria, where the boundary line runs between the Beneventans and the Greeks, a territory more than a thousand miles³¹ long; then Saxony, which constitutes no small part of Germany, and is reckoned to be twice as wide as the country inhabited by the Franks, while about equal to it in length; in addition, both Pannonias, Dacia beyond the Danube, and Istria, Liburnia, and Dalmatia, except the cities on the coast, which he left to the Greek Emperor for friendship's sake, and because of the treaty that he had made with him. In fine, he vanquished and made tributary all the wild and barbarous tribes dwelling in Germany between the Rhine and the Vistula, the Ocean and the Danube, all of which speak very much the same language, but differ widely from one another in customs and dress. The chief among them are the Welatabians, the Sorabians, the Abodriti, and the Bohemians, and he had to make war upon these; but the rest, by far the larger number, submitted to him of their own accord.

xvi. He added to the glory of his reign by

gaining the good will of several kings and nations; so close, indeed, was the alliance that he contracted with Alfonso,³² King of Galicia and Asturias, that the latter, when sending letters or ambassadors to Charles, invariably styled himself his man. His munificence won the kings of the Scots also to pay such deference to his wishes that they never gave him any other title than lord, or themselves than subjects and slaves: there are letters from them extant³³ in which these feelings in his regard are expressed. His relations with Aaron,³⁴ King of the Persians, who ruled over almost the whole of the East, India excepted, were so friendly that this prince preferred his favor to that of all the kings and potentates of the earth, and considered that to him alone marks of honor and munificence were due. Accordingly, when the ambassadors sent by Charles to visit the most holy sepulchre and place of resurrection of our Lord and Savior presented themselves before him with gifts, and made known their master's wishes, he not only granted what was asked, but gave possession of that holy and blessed spot. When they returned, he dispatched his ambassadors with them, and sent magnificent gifts, besides stuffs, perfumes, and other rich products of the Eastern lands. A few years before this, Charles had

asked him for an elephant, and he sent the only one that he had. The Emperors of Constantinople, Nicephorus,³⁵ Michael,³⁶ and Leo,³⁷ made advances to Charles, and sought friendship and alliance with him by several embassies; and even when the Greeks suspected him of designing to wrest the empire from them, because of his assumption of the title Emperor, they made a close alliance with him, that he might have no cause of offense. In fact, the power of the Franks was always viewed by the Greeks and Romans with a jealous eye, whence the Greek proverb "Have the Frank for your friend, but not for your neighbor."

xvii. This King, who showed himself so great in extending his empire and subduing foreign nations, and was constantly occupied with plans to that end, undertook also very many works calculated to adorn and benefit his kingdom, and brought several of them to completion. Among these, the most deserving of mention are the basilica of the Holy Mother of God at Aix-la-Chapelle, built in the most admirable manner, and a bridge over the Rhine at Mayence, half a mile long, the breadth of the river at this point. This bridge was destroyed by fire the year before Charles died, but, owing to his death so soon after, could

May, 813

not be repaired, although he had intended to rebuild it in stone. He began two palaces³⁸ of beautiful workmanship—one near his manor called Ingelheim, not far from Mayence; the other at Nimeguen, on the Waal, the stream that washes the south side of the island of the Batavians. But, above all, sacred edifices were the object of his care throughout his whole kingdom; and whenever he found them falling to ruin from age, he commanded the priests and fathers who had charge of them to repair them, and made sure by commissioners that his instructions were obeyed. He also fitted out a fleet for the war with the Northmen; the vessels required for this purpose were built on the rivers that flow from Gaul and Germany into the Northern Ocean. Moreover, since the Northmen continually overran and laid waste the Gallic and German coasts, he caused watch and ward to be kept in all the harbors, and at the mouths of rivers large enough to admit the entrance of vessels, to prevent the enemy from disembarking; and in the South, in Narbonensis and Septimania, and along the whole coast of Italy as far as Rome, he took the same precautions against the Moors, who had recently begun their piratical practices. Hence, Italy suffered no great harm in his time at the hands of the Moors, nor Gaul and Germany from the

Northmen, save that the Moors got possession of the Etruscan town of Civita Vecchia by treachery, and sacked it, and the Northmen harried some of the islands in Frisia off the German coast.

XVIII. Thus did Charles defend and increase as well as beautify his kingdom, as is well known; and here let me express my admiration of his great qualities and his extraordinary constancy alike in good and evil fortune. I will now forthwith proceed to give the details of his private and family life.

After his father's death, while sharing the kingdom with his brother, he bore his unfriendliness and jealousy most patiently, and, to the wonder of all, could not be provoked to be angry with him. Later he married a daughter³⁹ of Desiderius, King of the Lombards, at the instance of his mother; but he repudiated her at the end of a year for some reason unknown, and married Hildegard, a woman of high birth, of Suabian origin. He had three sons by her—Charles, Pepin,⁴⁰ and Louis⁴¹—and as many daughters⁴²—Hruodrud,⁴³ Bertha,⁴⁴ and Gisela. He had three other daughters besides these—Theoderada,⁴⁵ Hiltrud,⁴⁶ and Ruodhaid—two by his third wife, Fastrada, a woman of East Frankish⁴⁷ (that is to say, of German) origin, and the third by a concubine, whose name for

768-71

770

771

the moment escapes me.⁴⁸ At the death of
 794 Fastrada, he married Liutgard, an Alemannic
 woman, who bore him no children. After her
June 4, death he had three concubines⁴⁹—Gersuinda,
 800 a Saxon, by whom he had Adaltrud; Regina,
 who was the mother of Drogo and Hugh;⁵⁰ and
 Ethelind, by whom he had Theodoric.⁵¹
 Charles' mother, Berthrada, passed her old
 age with him in great honor; he entertained
 the greatest veneration for her; and there was
 never any disagreement between them except
 when he divorced the daughter of King Desi-
 derius, whom he had married to please her. She
 783 died soon after Hildegard, after living to see
 three grandsons and as many granddaughters
 in her son's house, and he buried her with great
 pomp in the Basilica of St. Denis, where his
 father lay. He had an only sister,⁵² Gisela, who
 had consecrated herself to a religious life from
 girlhood, and he cherished as much affection
 810 for her as for his mother. She also died a few
 years before him in the nunnery where she
 had passed her life.⁵³

xix. The plan that he adopted for his chil-
 dren's education was, first of all, to have both
 boys and girls instructed in the liberal arts, to
 which he also turned his own attention. As
 soon as their years admitted, in accordance
 with the custom of the Franks, the boys had to

learn horsemanship, and to practice war and the chase, and the girls to familiarize themselves with cloth-making, and to handle distaff and spindle, that they might not grow indolent through idleness, and he fostered in them every virtuous sentiment. He only lost three of all his children before his death, two sons and one daughter, Charles, who was the eldest, Pepin, whom he had made King of Italy, and Hruodrud, his oldest daughter, whom he had betrothed to Constantine,⁵⁴ Emperor of the Greeks. Pepin left one son, named Bernard,⁵⁵ and five daughters, Adelaide, Atula, Guntrada, Berthaid, and Theoderada. The King gave a striking proof of his fatherly affection at the time of Pepin's death: he appointed the grandson to succeed Pepin, and had the granddaughters brought up with his own daughters. When his sons and his daughter died, he was not so calm as might have been expected from his remarkably strong mind, for his affections were no less strong, and moved him to tears. Again, when he was told of the death of Hadrian, the Roman Pontiff, whom he had loved most of all his friends, he wept as much as if he had lost a brother, or a very dear son. He was by nature most ready to contract friendships, and not only made friends easily, but clung to them persistently, and cherished most fondly those

810
813
796

with whom he had formed such ties. He was so careful of the training of his sons and daughters that he never took his meals without them when he was at home, and never made a journey without them; his sons would ride at his side, and his daughters follow him, while a number of his bodyguard, detailed for their protection, brought up the rear. Strange to say, although they were very handsome women, and he loved them very dearly, he was never willing to marry⁵⁶ any of them to a man of their own nation or to a foreigner, but kept them all at home until his death, saying that he could not dispense with their society. Hence, though otherwise happy, he experienced the malignity of fortune as far as they were concerned; yet he concealed his knowledge of the rumors current in regard to them, and of the suspicions entertained of their honor.⁵⁷

xx. By one of his concubines⁵⁸ he had a son, handsome in face, but hunchbacked, named Pepin, whom I omitted to mention in the list of his children. When Charles was at war with the Huns, and was wintering in Bavaria, this Pepin shammed sickness, and
792 plotted against his father in company with some of the leading Franks, who seduced him with vain promises of the royal authority.

When his deceit was discovered, and the conspirators were punished, his head was shaved, and he was suffered, in accordance with his wishes, to devote himself to a religious life in the monastery of Prüm. A formidable conspiracy against Charles had previously been set on foot in Germany, but all the traitors were banished, some of them without mutilation, others after their eyes had been put out. Three of them only lost their lives; they drew their swords and resisted arrest, and, after killing several men, were cut down, because they could not be otherwise overpowered. It is supposed that the cruelty of Queen Fastrada was the primary cause of these plots, and they were both due to Charles' apparent acquiescence in his wife's cruel conduct, and deviation from the usual kindness and gentleness of his disposition. All the rest of his life he was regarded by everyone with the utmost love and affection, so much so that not the least accusation of unjust rigor was ever made against him.

785-86

xxi. He liked foreigners, and was at great pains to take them under his protection. There were often so many of them, both in the palace and the kingdom, that they might reasonably have been considered a nuisance; but he, with his broad humanity, was very little disturbed by such annoyances, because he felt himself

compensated for these great inconveniences by the praises of his generosity and the reward of high renown.

xxii. Charles was large and strong, and of lofty stature, though not disproportionately tall (his height is well known to have been seven times the length of his foot); the upper part of his head was round, his eyes very large and animated, nose a little long, hair fair, and face laughing and merry. Thus his appearance was always stately and dignified, whether he was standing or sitting; although his neck was thick and somewhat short, and his belly rather prominent; but the symmetry of the rest of his body concealed these defects. His gait was firm, his whole carriage manly, and his voice clear, but not so strong as his size led one to expect. His health was excellent, except during the four years preceding his death, when he was subject to frequent fevers; at the last he even limped a little with one foot. Even in those years he consulted rather his own inclinations than the advice of physicians, who were almost hateful to him, because they wanted him to give up roasts, to which he was accustomed, and to eat boiled meat instead. In accordance with the national custom, he took frequent exercise on horseback and in the chase, accomplishments in which scarcely any

people in the world can equal the Franks. He enjoyed the exhalations from natural warm springs, and often practiced swimming, in which he was such an adept that none could surpass him; and hence it was that he built his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and lived there constantly during his latter years until his death. He used not only to invite his sons to his bath, but his nobles and friends, and now and then a troop of his retinue or bodyguard, so that a hundred or more persons sometimes bathed with him.

XXIII. He used to wear the national, that is to say, the Frank, dress—next his skin a linen shirt and linen breeches, and above these a tunic fringed with silk; while hose fastened by bands covered his lower limbs, and shoes his feet, and he protected his shoulders and chest in winter by a close-fitting coat of otter or marten skins. Over all he flung a blue cloak, and he always had a sword girt about him, usually one with a gold or silver hilt and belt; he sometimes carried a jeweled sword, but only on great feastdays or at the reception of ambassadors from foreign nations. He despised foreign costumes, however handsome, and never allowed himself to be robed in them, except twice in Rome, when he donned the Roman tunic, chlamys, and shoes; the first

time at the request of Pope Hadrian,⁵⁹ the second to gratify Leo,⁶⁰ Hadrian's successor. On great feastdays he made use of embroidered clothes and shoes bedecked with precious stones, his cloak was fastened by a golden buckle, and he appeared crowned with a diadem of gold and gems, but on other days his dress varied little from the common dress of the people.

xxiv. Charles was temperate in eating, and particularly so in drinking, for he abominated drunkenness in anybody, much more in himself and those of his household; but he could not easily abstain from food, and often complained that fasts injured his health. He very rarely gave entertainments, only on great feastdays, and then to large numbers of people. His meals ordinarily consisted of four courses, not counting the roast, which his huntsmen used to bring in on the spit; he was more fond of this than of any other dish. While at table, he listened to reading or music. The subjects of the readings were the stories and deeds of olden time: he was fond, too, of St. Augustine's books, and especially of the one entitled "The City of God." He was so moderate in the use of wine and all sorts of drink that he rarely allowed himself more than three cups in the course of a meal. In summer,

after the midday meal, he would eat some fruit, drain a single cup, put off his clothes and shoes, just as he did for the night, and rest for two or three hours. He was in the habit of awaking and rising from bed four or five times during the night. While he was dressing and putting on his shoes, he not only gave audience to his friends, but if the Count of the Palace told him of any suit in which his judgment was necessary, he had the parties brought before him forthwith, took cognizance of the case, and gave his decision, just as if he were sitting on the judgment seat. This was not the only business that he transacted at this time, but he performed any duty of the day whatever, whether he had to attend to the matter himself, or to give commands concerning it to his officers.

xxv. Charles had the gift of ready and fluent speech, and could express whatever he had to say with the utmost clearness. He was not satisfied with command of his native language merely, but gave attention to the study of foreign ones, and in particular was such a master of Latin that he could speak it as well as his native tongue; but he could understand Greek better than he could speak it. He was so eloquent, indeed, that he might have passed for a teacher of eloquence. He most zealously

cultivated the liberal arts, held those who taught them in great esteem, and conferred great honors upon them. He took lessons in grammar of the deacon Peter of Pisa,⁶¹ at that time an aged man. Another deacon, Albin of Britain, surnamed Alcuin,⁶² a man of Saxon extraction, who was the greatest scholar of the day, was his teacher in other branches of learning. The King spent much time and labor with him studying rhetoric, dialectics, and especially astronomy; he learned to reckon, and used to investigate the motions of the heavenly bodies most curiously, with an intelligent scrutiny. He also tried to write, and used to keep tablets and blanks in bed under his pillow, that at leisure hours he might accustom his hand to form the letters; however, as he did not begin his efforts in due season, but late in life, they met with ill success.

xxvi. He cherished with the greatest fervor and devotion the principles of the Christian religion, which had been instilled into him from infancy. Hence it was that he built the beautiful basilica at Aix-la-Chapelle, which he adorned with gold and silver and lamps, and with rails and doors of solid brass. He had the columns and marbles for this structure brought from Rome and Ravenna,⁶³ for he could not find such as were suitable elsewhere. He was

a constant worshipper at this church as long as his health permitted, going morning and evening, even after nightfall, besides attending mass; and he took care that all the services there conducted should be administered with the utmost possible propriety, very often warning the sextons not to let any improper or unclean thing be brought into the building or remain in it. He provided it with a great number of sacred vessels of gold and silver and with such a quantity of clerical robes that not even the doorkeepers who fill the humblest office in the church were obliged to wear their everyday clothes when in the exercise of their duties. He was at great pains to improve the church reading and psalmody, for he was well skilled in both, although he neither read in public nor sang, except in a low tone and with others.

xxvii. He was very forward in succoring the poor, and in that gratuitous generosity which the Greeks call alms, so much so that he not only made a point of giving in his own country and his own kingdom, but when he discovered that there were Christians living in poverty in Syria, Egypt, and Africa, at Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Carthage, he had compassion on their wants, and used to send money over the seas to them. The reason that

he zealously strove to make friends with the kings beyond seas was that he might get help and relief to the Christians living under their rule. He cherished the Church of St. Peter the Apostle at Rome above all other holy and sacred places, and heaped its treasury with a vast wealth of gold, silver, and precious stones. He sent great and countless gifts to the popes, and throughout his whole reign the wish that he had nearest at heart was to re-establish the ancient authority of the city of Rome under his care and by his influence, and to defend and protect the Church of St. Peter, and to beautify and enrich it out of his own store above all other churches. Although he held it in such veneration, he only repaired to Rome to pay his vows and make his supplications four times⁶⁴ during the whole forty-seven years⁶⁵ that he reigned.

xxviii. When he made his last journey thither, he had also other ends in view. The Romans had inflicted many injuries upon the Pontiff Leo, tearing out his eyes and cutting out his tongue, so that he had been compelled

Nov. 24,
800 to call upon the King for help. Charles accordingly went to Rome, to set in order the affairs of the Church, which were in great confusion, and passed the whole winter there. It was then

Dec. 25,
800 that he received the titles of Emperor and

Augustus, to which he at first had such an aversion that he declared that he would not have set foot in the Church the day that they were conferred, although it was a great feast-day, if he could have foreseen the design of the Pope. He bore very patiently with the jealousy which the Roman emperors showed upon his assuming these titles, for they took this step very ill; and by dint of frequent embassies and letters, in which he addressed them as brothers, he made their haughtiness yield to his magnanimity, a quality in which he was unquestionably much their superior.

XXIX. It was after he had received the imperial name that, finding the laws of his people very defective (the Franks have two sets of laws,⁶⁶ very different in many particulars), he determined to add what was wanting, to reconcile the discrepancies, and to correct what was vicious and wrongly cited in them. However, he went no further in this matter than to supplement the laws by a few capitularies, and those imperfect ones; but he caused the unwritten laws of all the tribes that came under his rule⁶⁷ to be compiled and reduced to writing. He also had the old rude songs that celebrate the deeds and wars of the ancient kings written out for transmission to posterity. He began a grammar of his native language. He

gave the months names in his own tongue, in place of the Latin and barbarous names by which they were formerly known among the Franks. He likewise designated the winds by twelve appropriate names; there were hardly more than four distinctive ones in use before. He called January, Wintarmanoth;⁶⁸ February, Hornung;⁶⁹ March, Lentzinmanoth;⁷⁰ April, Ostarmanoth;⁷¹ May, Winnemanoth;⁷² June, Brachmanoth;⁷³ July, Heuvimanoth;⁷⁴ August, Aranmanoth;⁷⁵ September, Witumanoth;⁷⁶ October, Windumemanoth;⁷⁷ November, Herbistmanoth;⁷⁸ December, Heilagmanoth.⁷⁹ He styled the winds as follows; Subsolanus, Ostroniwint; Eurus, Ostsundroni; Euroauster, Sundostroni; Auster, Sundroni; Austro-Africus, Sundwestroni; Africus, Westsundroni; Zephyrus, Westroni; Caurus, Westnordroni; Circius, Nordwestroni; Septentrio, Nordroni; Aquilo, Nordostroni; Vulturnus, Ostnordroni.⁸⁰

813 xxx. Toward the close of his life, when he was broken by ill-health and old age, he summoned Louis, King of Aquitania, his only surviving son by Hildegard, and gathered together all the chief men of the whole kingdom of the Franks in a solemn assembly. He appointed Louis, with their unanimous consent, to rule with himself over the whole kingdom,

and constituted him heir to the imperial name; then, placing the diadem upon his son's head, he bade him be proclaimed Emperor and Augustus. This step was hailed by all present with great favor, for it really seemed as if God had prompted him to it for the kingdom's good; it increased the King's dignity, and struck no little terror into foreign nations. After sending his son back to Aquitania, although weak from age he set out to hunt, as usual, near his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and passed the rest of the autumn in the chase, returning thither about the first of November. While wintering there, he was seized, in the month of January, with a high fever, and took to his bed. As soon as he was taken sick, he prescribed for himself abstinence from food, as he always used to do in case of fever, thinking that the disease could be driven off, or at least mitigated, by fasting. Besides the fever, he suffered from a pain in the side, which the Greeks call pleurisy; but he still persisted in fasting, and in keeping up his strength only by draughts taken at very long intervals. He died January twenty-eighth, the seventh day from the time that he took to his bed, at nine o'clock in the morning, after partaking of the holy communion, in the seventy-second year of his age⁸¹ and the forty-seventh of his reign.

Nov. 1,
813

Jan. 22,
814

Jan. 28
814

xxxI. His body was washed and cared for in the usual manner, and was then carried to the church, and interred amid the greatest lamentations of all the people. There was some question at first where to lay him, because in his lifetime he had given no directions as to his burial; but at length all agreed that he could nowhere be more honorably entombed than in the very basilica that he had built in the town at his own expense, for love of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and in honor of the Holy and Eternal Virgin, His Mother. He was buried there the same day that he died, and a gilded arch was erected above his tomb with his image and an inscription. The words of the inscription were as follows: "In this tomb lies the body of Charles, the Great and Orthodox Emperor, who gloriously extended the kingdom of the Franks, and reigned prosperously for forty-seven years.⁸² He died at the age of seventy, in the year of our Lord 814, the 7th Indiction, on the 28th day of January."

xxxII. Very many omens had portended his approaching end, a fact that he had recognized as well as others. Eclipses both of the sun and moon were very frequent during the last three years of his life, and a black spot was visible on the sun for the space of seven days. The gallery between the basilica and the palace,

which he had built at great pains and labor, fell in sudden ruin to the ground on the day of the Ascension of our Lord. The wooden bridge over the Rhine at Mayence, which he had caused to be constructed with admirable skill, at the cost of ten years' hard work, so that it seemed as if it might last forever, was so completely consumed in three hours by an accidental fire that not a single splinter of it was left, except what was under water. Moreover, one day in his last campaign into Saxony against Godfred, King of the Danes, Charles himself saw a ball of fire fall suddenly from the heavens with a great light, just as he was leaving camp before sunrise to set out on the march. It rushed across the clear sky from right to left, and everybody was wondering what was the meaning of the sign, when the horse which he was riding gave a sudden plunge, head foremost, and fell, and threw him to the ground so heavily that his cloak buckle was broken and his sword belt shattered; and after his servants had hastened to him and relieved him of his arms, he could not rise without their assistance. He happened to have a javelin in his hand when he was thrown, and this was struck from his grasp with such force that it was found lying at a distance of twenty feet or more from the spot. Again, the palace at Aix-

May, 813

810

la-Chapelle frequently trembled, the roofs of whatever buildings he tarried in kept up a continual crackling noise, the basilica in which he was afterwards buried was struck by lightning, and the gilded ball that adorned the pinnacle of the roof was shattered by the thunderbolt and hurled upon the bishop's house adjoining. In this same basilica, on the margin of the cornice that ran around the interior, between the upper and lower tiers of arches, a legend was inscribed in red letters, stating who was the builder of the temple, the last words of which were *Karolus Princeps*. The year that he died it was remarked by some, a few months before his decease, that the letters of the word *Princeps* were so effaced as to be no longer decipherable. But Charles despised, or affected to despise, all these omens, as having no reference whatever to him.

811 XXXIII. It had been his intention to make a will, that he might give some share in the inheritance to his daughters and the children of his concubines; but it was begun too late and could not be finished. Three years before his death, however, he made a division of his treasures, money, clothes, and other movable goods in the presence of his friends and servants, and called them to witness it, that their voices might insure the ratification of the dis-

position thus made. He had a summary drawn up of his wishes regarding this distribution of his property, the terms and text of which are as follows:

“In the name of the Lord God, the Almighty Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is the inventory and division dictated by the most glorious and most pious Lord Charles, Emperor Augustus, in the 811th year of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the 43d year of his reign in France and 37th in Italy, the 11th of his empire, and the 4th Indiction, which considerations of piety and prudence have determined him, and the favor of God enabled him, to make of his treasures and money ascertained this day to be in his treasure chamber. In this division he is especially desirous to provide not only that the largess of alms which Christians usually make of their possessions shall be made for himself in due course and order out of his wealth, but also that his heirs shall be free from all doubt, and know clearly what belongs to them, and be able to share their property by suitable partition without litigation or strife. With this intention and to this end he has first divided all his substance and movable goods ascertained to be in his treasure chamber on the day aforesaid in gold, silver, precious stones, and royal

ornaments into three lots, and has subdivided and set off two of the said lots into twenty-one parts, keeping the third entire. The first two lots have been thus subdivided into twenty-one parts because there are in his kingdom twenty-one⁸³ recognized metropolitan cities, and in order that each archbishopric may receive by way of alms, at the hands of his heirs and friends, one of the said parts, and that the archbishop who shall then administer its affairs shall take the part given to it, and share the same with his suffragans in such manner that one third shall go to the Church, and the remaining two thirds be divided among the suffragans. The twenty-one parts into which the first two lots are to be distributed, according to the number of recognized metropolitan cities, have been set apart one from another, and each has been put aside by itself in a box labeled with the name of the city for which it is destined. The names of the cities to which this alms or largess is to be sent are as follows: Rome, Ravenna, Milan, Friuli, Grado, Cologne, Mayence, Salzburg, Treves, Sens, Besançon, Lyons, Rouen, Rheims, Arles, Vienne, Moutiers-en-Tarantaise, Embrun, Bordeaux, Tours, and Bourges. The third lot, which he wishes to be kept entire, is to be bestowed as follows: While the first two lots

are to be divided into the parts aforesaid, and set aside under seal, the third lot shall be employed for the owner's daily needs, as property which he shall be under no obligation to part with in order to the fulfillment of any vow, and this as long as he shall be in the flesh, or consider it necessary for his use. But upon his death, or voluntary renunciation of the affairs of this world, this said lot shall be divided into four parts, and one thereof shall be added to the aforesaid twenty-one parts; the second shall be assigned to his sons and daughters, and to the sons and daughters of his sons, to be distributed among them in just and equal partition; the third, in accordance with the custom common among Christians, shall be devoted to the poor; and the fourth shall go to the support of the men servants and maid servants on duty in the palace. It is his wish that to this said third lot of the whole amount, which consists, as well as the rest, of gold and silver, shall be added all the vessels and utensils of brass, iron, and other metals, together with the arms, clothing, and other movable goods, costly and cheap, adapted to divers uses, as hangings, coverlets, carpets, woollen stuffs, leathern articles, pack-saddles, and whatsoever shall be found in his treasure chamber and wardrobe at that time, in order

that thus the parts of the said lot may be augmented, and the alms distributed reach more persons. He ordains that his chapel—that is to say, its church property, as well that which he has provided and collected as that which came to him by inheritance from his father—shall remain entire, and not be dissevered by any partition whatever. If, however, any vessels, books, or other articles be found therein which are certainly known not to have been given by him to the said chapel, whoever wants them shall have them on paying their value at a fair estimation. He likewise commands that the books which he has collected in his library in great numbers shall be sold for fair prices to such as want them, and the money received therefrom given to the poor. It is well known that among his other property and treasures are three silver tables, and one very large and massive golden one. He directs and commands that the square silver table, upon which there is a representation of the city of Constantinople, shall be sent to the Basilica of St. Peter the Apostle at Rome, with the other gifts destined therefor; that the round one, adorned with a delineation of the city of Rome, shall be given to the Episcopal Church at Ravenna; that the third, which far surpasses the other two in weight and in beauty

of workmanship, and is made in three circles, showing the plan of the whole universe,⁸⁴ drawn with skill and delicacy, shall go, together with the golden table, fourthly above mentioned, to increase that lot which is to be devoted to his heirs and to alms.

This deed, and the dispositions thereof, he has made and appointed in the presence of the bishops, abbots, and counts able to be present, whose names are hereto subscribed: Bishops—Hildebald,⁸⁵ Ricolf,⁸⁶ Arno,⁸⁷ Wolfar,⁸⁸ Bernoin,⁸⁹ Laidrad,⁹⁰ John,⁹¹ Theodulf,⁹² Jesse,⁹³ Heito,⁹⁴ Waltgaud.⁹⁵ Abbots — Fredugis,⁹⁶ Adalung,⁹⁷ Angilbert,⁹⁸ Irmino.⁹⁹ Counts — Walacho,¹⁰⁰ Meginher, Otulf, Stephen, Unruoch, Burchard, Meginhard, Hatto, Rihwin, Edo, Ercangar, Gerold, Bero, Hildiger, Rocculf.”

Charles' son Louis, who by the grace of God succeeded him, after examining this summary, took pains to fulfill all its conditions most religiously as soon as possible after his father's death. 814

NOTES

1. Childeric III, 743-52.
2. Stephen II (or III), 752-57. He anointed Pepin in 754. His predecessor, Zacharias, had ordered the deposition of Childeric just before his death, in 752.
3. The badge of honor and freedom. See Grimm's *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, pp. 146, 239.
4. An ancient royal custom, according to Grimm's *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, p. 262.
5. Not L'Étang de Berre, but a small stream emptying into L'Étang de Sijean.
6. In fact more than sixteen years.
7. See V.
8. This account of the division is somewhat inaccurate.
9. Gerberga.
10. One was named Pepin.
11. In fact more than three years.
12. Charles was born in 742. See XXX and XXXI. The day of his birth is supposed to have been April 2, on the testimony of a ninth-century calendar of the Monastery of Lorsch. The place of his birth is wholly uncertain. See Mabillon's *De Re Diplomaticâ Suppl.* cap. IX.
13. See III.
14. Hadrian I., 772-95.
15. Stephen II (or III), 752-57.

16. At the time of Witikind's great revolt in 782, Charles had 4500 Saxons beheaded in one day at Verden, on the Aller.
17. The Lippescher Wald, a part of the great Teuto-burger Wald.
18. Near Osnabrück, at a place called, in the Middle Ages, Schlachtvörderberg, now known as Die Clüs.
19. The Saxon war began in 772; the Italian war in 773.
20. Roncesvalles.
21. This is the only mention in history of this famous character.
22. Liutberga.
23. The Baltic Sea.
24. Modern Esthonia owes its name to the Aïsti.
25. The Huns had aided and abetted Tassilo. See XI.
26. The subject of the verb is not expressed in the original, and this passage is commonly rendered "The Franks had passed," etc., which makes the sentence meaningless.
27. The Tarsatica of olden time. very near Tarsaticum (Fiume).
28. He was brother to Hildegard, Charles' wife.
29. Bohemian war, 805-6; Linonian war, 808.
30. From October 9, 768, to January 28, 814, the date of Charles' death, is little more than forty-five years. The number forty-seven is arrived at by considering the years 768 and 814 as complete.
31. Roman miles.
32. Alfonso II, the Chaste, 791-842.
33. None of them has come down to us.
34. The famous Haroun al Raschid, fifth of the Abassids, 786-809.
35. Nicephorus I, 802-11.

36. Michael I, 811-13.
37. Leo V, 813-20.
38. These palaces were both rebuilt by Frederick Barbarossa. The one at Ingelheim is described at length by Ermoldus Nigellus, *Carm.* iv. 181-282.
39. Her name is variously given; perhaps Desiderata has the best authority. According to the Monk of St. Gall, Charles repudiated her because she was an invalid, and unable to bear children.
40. He was at first called Carloman, but took the name of Pepin when he was baptized and anointed King of Italy by Hadrian I, in 781.
41. He was one of twins. His twin brother, Lothar, died in infancy. See Genealogical Table.
42. Einhard omits Adelaide and Hildegard. See Genealogical Table.
43. See Note 54.
44. See Note 98.
45. She became Abbess of Notre Dame d'Argenteuil, near Paris.
46. She became Abbess of Faremoutiers, according to Father Anselm.
47. She was the daughter of Rodolph, Count of Franconia.
48. Supposed by some to have been Himiltrud, mother of Pepin the Hunchback. See Note 58.
49. Some texts read "four concubines—Mathalgard, who bore him a daughter named Rothild Gersuinda," etc. Those who accept this reading identify Rothild with Rothild, Abbess of Faremoutiers. See the charter published by Mabillon in *Annal. Ord. Bened.* ii. 745, in which the Emperor Lothar styles the latter "our beloved aunt."
50. They both received the tonsure in 818. Drogo became Bishop of Metz, and died December 8, 855.

Hugh became Abbot of St. Quentin, and died June 14, 844.

51. Theodoric, born 810, received the tonsure at the same time with Drogo and Hugh.
52. Charles had three sisters (see Genealogical Table), but Gisela was for many years the only one surviving.
53. At Chelles, near Paris.
54. Constantine VI, 780-802. Marriage did not follow this betrothal. Hruodrud had by Roderick, Count of Maine, a natural son, Louis, who became Abbot of St. Denis, and died in 867.
55. His eyes were put out by order of Louis the Pious, and he died in consequence in 817.
56. He married Bertha to Angilbert. See Note 98.
57. See Note 54 and Note 98.
58. According to Paulus Diaconus, *Gesta Epp. Mett.* (*Mon. Germ. Script.* ii. 265), and other authorities, the name of this concubine was Himiltrud. Pope Stephen II (or III) has been thought to refer to her as Charles' lawful wife, in a letter written by him in 770 to Charles and Carloman. Her son, Pepin, is named before Hildegard's sons in certain litanies compiled shortly after Charles' marriage with Fastrada. She is supposed by some to have been also the mother of Ruodhaid, mentioned in XVIII. Pepin the Hunchback died in 811.
59. Hadrian I, 772-95.
60. Leo III, 795-816.
61. At the capture of Pavia in 774 (see VI), Charles found Peter teaching there, and carried him off to install him in his palace school. No work of his has reached us.
62. Alcuin was born at York in 735, came to Charles' court about 782, and died Abbot of St. Martin of Tours, in 804.

63. See letter of Hadrian I to Charles, in Jaffé's "Monumenta Carolina," p. 268.
64. In 774, 781, 787, and 800.
65. See Note 30.
66. The Salic and Ripuarian.
67. Of the Saxons, Frisians, and Thuringians.
68. Winter month.
69. Horn-shedding (of stags).
70. Spring month.
71. Easter month.
72. Pasture month.
73. Break (ground) month.
74. Hay month.
75. Ears (of grain) month.
76. Wood month.
77. Vintage month.
78. Harvest month.
79. Holy month.
80. The compass, according to Charles, is boxed by twelve points therefore, as follows: N., NE., EN., E., ES., SE., S., SW., WS., W., WN., NW.
81. Admitting the date of Charles' birth to have been April 2, 742 (see Note 12), he was not quite seventy years and ten months old when he died.
82. See Note 30.
83. There were, in fact, twenty-two. Narbonne is omitted from the list for reasons unknown.
84. The Ptolemaic universe, as modified by Aristotle and Hipparchus. The Primum Mobile was added later. For a diagram and brief description of the Ptolemaic universe, see Masson's Introduction to *Paradise Lost* in his edition of Milton's *Poetical Works*.
85. Cologne.
86. Mayence.

87. Salzburg.
88. Rheims.
89. Besançon.
90. Lyons.
91. Arles.
92. Orleans.
93. Amiens.
94. Basle.
95. Liège.
96. St. Bertin in St. Omer. (St. Martin of Tours—Jaffé.)
97. St. Vedast in Arras. (Lorsch.—Jaffé.)
98. Angilbert had been first dean of the Chapter in the palace of Pepin, King of Italy, Duke of Maritime France, and Charles' Prime Minister; but in 790 he retired to the monastery of Centulum in St. Riquier, and became its abbot several years previous to his death, in 814. He was bred at court, and had an intrigue with Charles' daughter Bertha, who had two sons by him—Hartnidus and Nithardus the historian. Charles legitimated this union in 787. Bertha took the veil when Angilbert became a monk. Little except the *Carmen de Karolo Magno* remains to show Angilbert's literary ability.
99. St. Germain in Paris.
100. He was afterward Abbot of Corvey.

SELECTED ANN ARBOR PAPERBACKS

works of enduring merit

- AA 4 THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER, 1670-1732 Verner W. Crane
- AA 9 STONEWALL JACKSON Allen Tate
- AA 10 CHURCH, STATE, AND EDUCATION Sir Ernest Barker
- AA 13 THOMAS JEFFERSON: The Apostle of Americanism Gilbert Chinard
- AA 18 THOMAS MORE R. W. Chambers
- AA 21 THE PURITAN MIND Herbert W. Schneider
- AA 28 ANTISLAVERY ORIGINS OF THE CIVIL WAR IN THE UNITED STATES Dwight Lowell Dumond
- AA 31 POPULATION: THE FIRST ESSAY Thomas R. Malthus
- AA 34 THE ORIGIN OF RUSSIAN COMMUNISM Nicolas Berdyaev
- AA 35 THE LIFE OF CHARLEMAGNE Einhard
- AA 49 THE GATEWAY TO THE MIDDLE AGES: ITALY Eleanor Shipley Duckett
- AA 50 THE GATEWAY TO THE MIDDLE AGES: FRANCE AND BRITAIN Eleanor Shipley Duckett
- AA 51 THE GATEWAY TO THE MIDDLE AGES: MONASTICISM Eleanor Shipley Duckett
- AA 53 VOICES OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION John Bowditch and Clement Ramsland, ed.
- AA 54 HOBBS Sir Leslie Stephen
- AA 55 THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION Nicolas Berdyaev
- AA 56 TERRORISM AND COMMUNISM Leon Trotsky
- AA 57 THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION and LENINISM OR MARXISM? Rosa Luxemburg
- AA 59 THE FATE OF MAN IN THE MODERN WORLD Nicolas Berdyaev
- AA 61 THE REFORMATION OF THE 16TH CENTURY Rev. Charles Beard
- AA 62 A HISTORY OF BUSINESS: From Babylon to the Monopolists Vol. I Miriam Beard
- AA 65 A PREFACE TO POLITICS Walter Lippmann
- AA 66 FROM HEGEL TO MARX: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx Sidney Hook
- AA 67 WORLD COMMUNISM: A History of the Communist International F. Borkenau
- AA 69 THE MYTH OF THE RULING CLASS: Gaetano Mosca and the Elite James H. Meisel
- AA 72 THE MERCHANT CLASS OF MEDIEVAL LONDON Sylvia L. Thrupp
- AA 74 CAPITALISM IN AMSTERDAM IN THE 17TH CENTURY Violet Barbour
- AA 76 A HISTORY OF BUSINESS: From the Monopolists to the Organization Man Vol. II M. Beard
- AA 77 THE SPANISH COCKPIT Franz Borkenau
- AA 78 THE HERD IN AMERICA Dixon Wecter
- AA 79 THUCYDIDES John H. Finley, Jr.
- AA 80 SECRET HISTORY Procopius
- AA 86 LAISSEZ FAIRE AND THE GENERAL-WELFARE STATE Sidney Fine
- AA 88 ROMAN POLITICAL IDEAS AND PRACTICE F. E. Adcock
- AA 94 POETRY AND POLITICS UNDER THE STUARTS C. V. Wedgwood
- AA 95 ANABASIS: The March Up Country Xenophon Translated by W. H. D. Rouse
- AA 100 THE CALCULUS OF CONSENT James M. Buchanan and Gordon Tullock
- AA 103 IMPERIALISM J. A. Hobson
- AA 104 REFLECTIONS OF A RUSSIAN STATESMAN Konstantin P. Pobedonostsev
- AA 110 BAROQUE TIMES IN OLD MEXICO Irving A. Leonard
- AA 111 THE AGE OF ATTILA C. D. Gordon
- AA 114 IMPERIAL GERMANY AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION Thorstein Veblen
- AA 115 CIVIL LIBERTIES AND THE CONSTITUTION Paul G. Kauper
- AA 118 NEGRO THOUGHT IN AMERICA August Meier
- AA 119 THE POLITICAL IDEAS OF THE ENGLISH ROMANTICISTS Crane Brinton
- AA 120 WILLIAM PENN Catherine Owens Pearce

For a complete list of Ann Arbor Paperback titles write:

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS / ANN ARBOR

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY



110 025

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY